



WORLD AGAINST



884  
FEB '10



19

# ACTION

## COMICS



RUCKA  
TRAUTMAN  
PÉREZ  
BIT

**LOIS LANE:**  
*TRAITOR!*

SECOND FEATURE

**CAPTAIN  
ACTION**



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THE HUMANS HAVE AN ABUNDANCE OF FAULTS.

ON A GENETIC LEVEL, THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THEM AND THEIR SIMIAN FOREBEARERS ARE ALMOST UNDETECTABLE.

THEIR LANGUAGE IS PRIMITIVE, LACKING THE MATHEMATICAL PRECISION OF MY NATIVE TONGUE.

BUT WITH THIS CRUDE TOOL, THEY HAVE A GIFT FOR CAPTURING UNIVERSAL TRUTH IN THE SIMPLEST OF PHRASES.

FOR ALL THEIR FLAWS, THEY DO POSSESS ONE REMARKABLE GIFT.

DON'T BE SCARED.

IT'S GONS TO BE ALL RIGHT. IT'S GONS TO BE...

THEY'RE WEAK AND FRAGILE, AND INDESCRIBABLY IGNORANT.

THARA?

I'M HERE.

I KNOW.

TRY TO RELAX. WE'LL FIGURE THIS OUT, CHRIS.

FOR EXAMPLE: "ALL GOOD THINGS COME TO HE WHO WAITS."

WE'LL FIX THIS.

WE'LL CERTAINLY TRY.

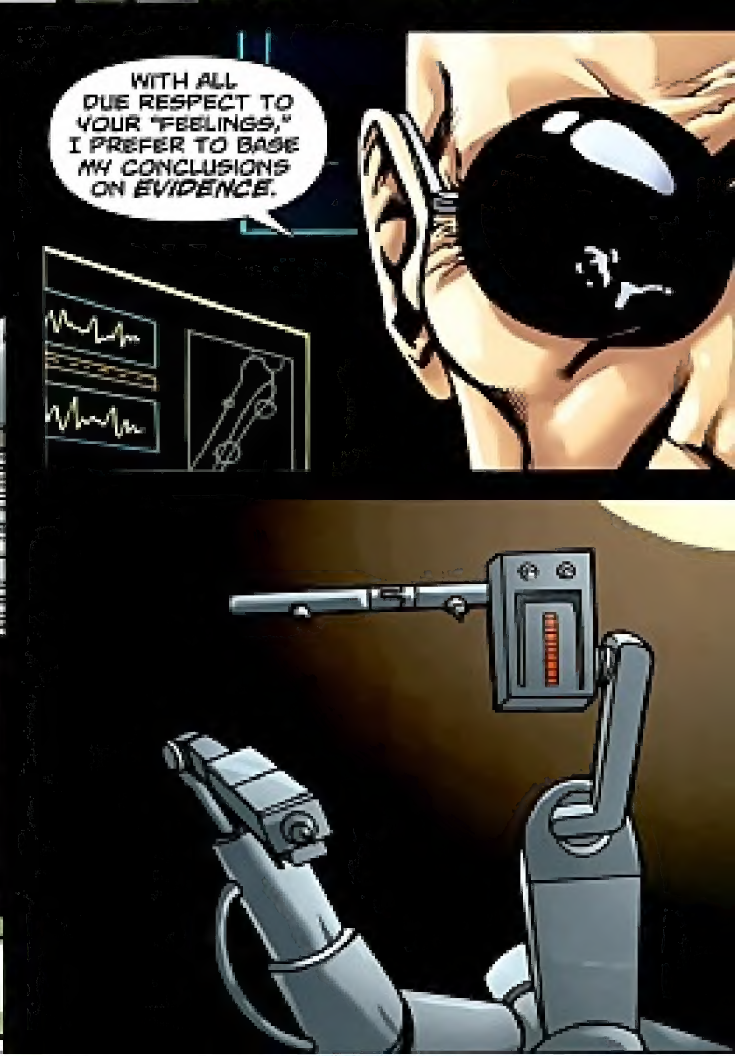
DR. PILLINGS IS ONE OF S.T.A.R. LABS' BEST XENOGENETICISTS.

IF ANYONE CAN FIGURE THIS OUT, HE CAN.

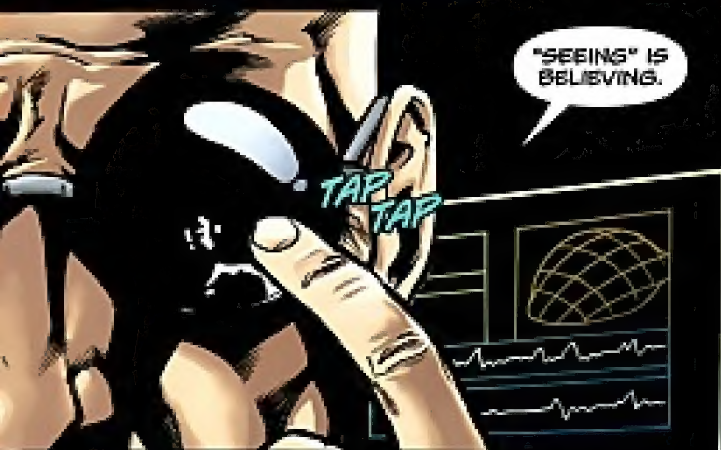
YOU HEAR THAT? YOU'RE IN GOOD HANDS.

AND I HAVE WAITED SO VERY LONG.











IT'S  
THEATER.

IN MY OWN LAB,  
TRACKING DOWN AND  
COUNTERACTING THE  
PHANTOM ZONE'S  
UNIQUE EFFECTS ON  
THE SUBJECT WOULD  
BE CHILD'S PLAY.

NNNNNGH!

# DIVINE SPARK

PART 2

FROM THE MISTS OF  
LOST KRYPTON, STORIES  
ARE TOLD OF TWO MYTHICAL  
HEROES WHO TIME AND TIME  
AGAIN ROSE TO PROTECT  
THEIR PEOPLE FROM  
TYRANNY AND  
TERROR.

HIGH WING  
Presents  
FLAMBERING

GREG RUCKA and ERIC TRAUTMANN: Writers

PERE PÉREZ: Penciller - BIT: Inker

JAVIER MENA: Colorist - ROB LEIGH: Letterer

CAFU with SANTIAGO ARCAS: Cover

WIL MOSS: Asst. Editor - MATT IDELSON: Editor

**SUPERMAN**  
created by  
Jerry Siegel  
and Joe  
Shuster

BUT APPEARANCES MUST BE  
MAINTAINED. LIKE THE RUDE  
OF MY "BLINDNESS," OR MY  
"KRYPTONIAN SYMPATHIES."

"DR. FILLINGS"—THE PURE  
SCIENTIST WHO ESCHEWS  
POLITICS, AND CARES ONLY FOR  
SCIENCE--WILL "STRUGGLE" TO  
SAVE THE "POOR BOY."

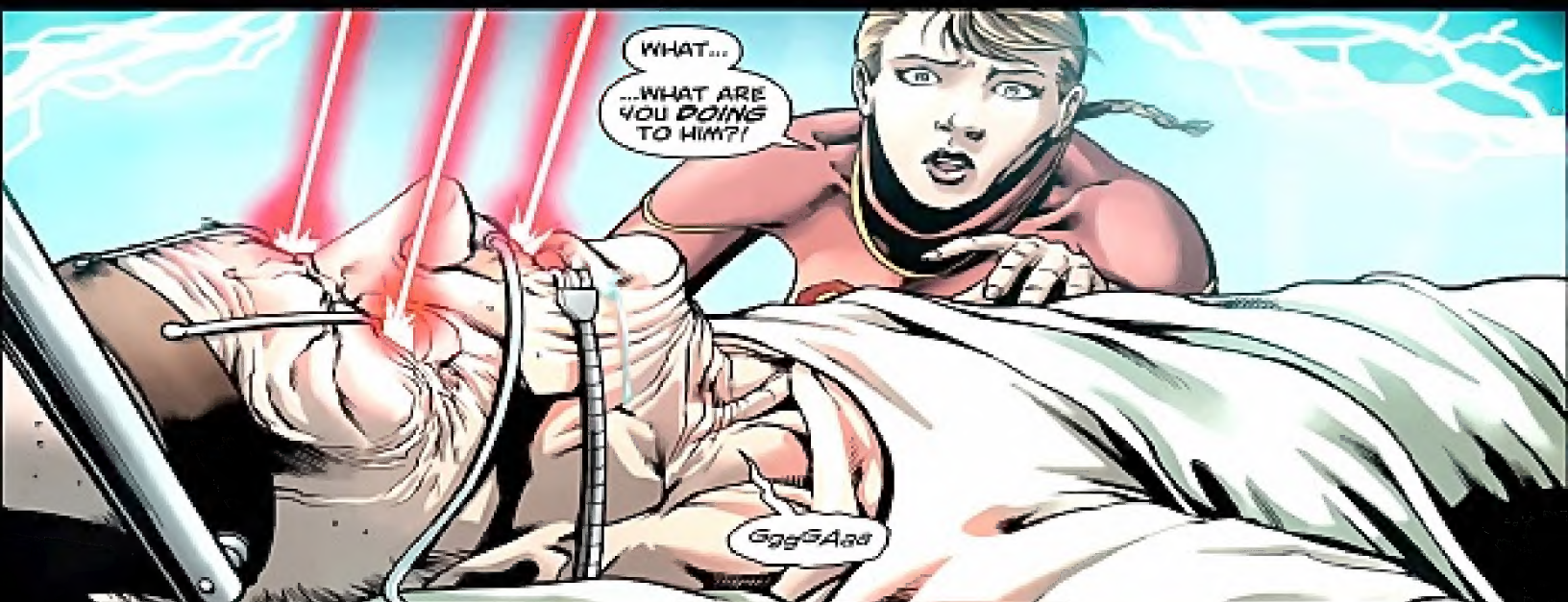
GgGLIK

GARB

KAS

AND ALL THE  
WHILE, MY OWN  
EXPERIMENT RUNS  
ITS COURSE.





WHAT...  
...WHAT ARE  
YOU DOING  
TO HIM?!

GggGaaa



SYSTEM  
CHARGE AT 51%:  
RECHARGE?

YES.  
PREPARE TO  
FIRE AGAIN.

THE LASER  
IS "SCRAPING" A  
D.N.A. SAMPLE FOR  
EXAMINATION.



IT'S ACTUALLY QUITE  
FASCINATING. THE LASER IS  
EXPERIMENTAL, AND DESIGNED  
FOR USE IN NUCLEAR  
REACTORS--

--BUT SHOULD  
HAVE ENOUGH  
PUNCH FOR THE  
JOB AT HAND.

AS AN ADDED  
BENEFIT, IT MAY ALSO  
INDICATE IF **STRESS** IS  
A CATALYST FOR THE  
AGING PHENOMENON.



THAT'S  
RIGHT,  
LITTLE  
FLAMEBIRD.

STRESS?



YOU'RE DOING  
THIS TO HIM  
DELIBERATELY?

YOUR NIGHTWING  
IS NOT THE ONLY  
ONE UNDER  
STRESS, IS HE?



THE DAILY PLANET.

...PENTAGON  
BUT NO  
REPORT--

...ABOUT THE  
MILITARY BUILD-UP  
AROUND  
MARKOVIA?

--GET  
A COMMENT,  
AT LEAST AN  
ATTRIBUTION--

LOIS?



Mhm.

FERRY.



SOMETHING  
UP?

HE'LL  
TELL YOU.



PERRY  
WHITE

CHIEF, IF  
THERE'S--

SHUT UP  
AND LISTEN,  
LOIS.



HOW IRONCLAD IS THIS STORY,  
THE FLAMEBIRD-SLASH-NIGHTWING-  
SLASH-SUPERGIRL-SLASH-  
REACTRON PIECE?

HOW GOOP IS  
YOUR SOURCE  
ON THIS?

I'M THE SOURCE,  
CHIEF. I'D HOPE THAT  
ANSWERS THE  
QUESTION.





YOU'RE SAVING MON-EL'S DEATH WAS **FAKED** IN ORDER TO GENERATE **ANTI-KRYPTONIAN** HYSTERIA AND PROPAGANDA TO FURTHER SOME GOVERNMENT AGENDA.

THAT THE METROPOLIS THREE WERE **FRAMED**, AND THAT **REACTRON**--A KNOWN KILLER-- WAS EMPLOYED BY YOUR FATHER TO PERPETUATE THIS HOAX."

EMPLOYED, IN ESSENCE, BY THE U.S. ARMY.

"SEE THE 'HUNT FOR REACTRON' STORY."  
--*Idoltron*

I KNOW WHAT I WROTE.

WHO'D YOU **SHOW THIS TO?** WHO ELSE **KNEW** YOU WERE **WORKING ON IT?**

WHAT? LANA, THAT'S IT, AND SHE'D **NEVER--**

IT **LEAKED**, LOIS, SOMEONE, SOMEHOW, IT **GOT OUT**.

I JUST GOT A CALL FROM A FRIEND AT D.O.D.--THE ARMY IS **ACCUSING** YOU OF **COLLABORATION**, THEY'RE **SAVING** YOU **HARBORED** **FLAMEBIRD** AND **NIGHTWINGS**.

THEY'RE **ACCUSING** YOU OF **TREASON**.

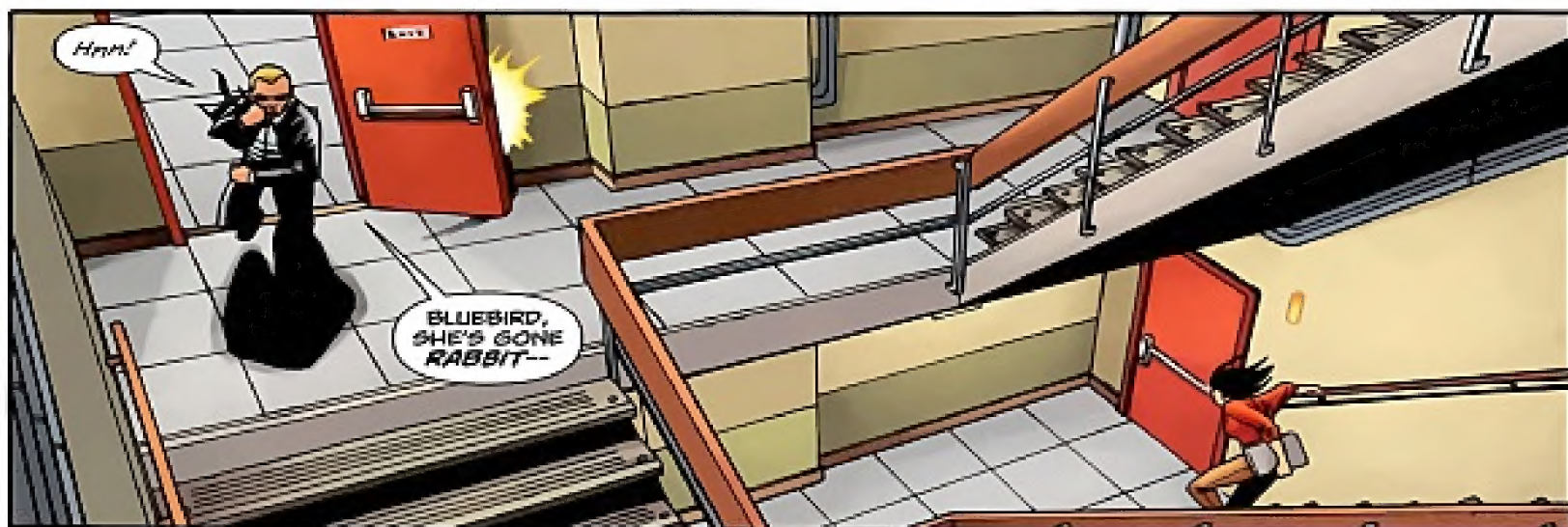
YOU NEED TO **GET OUT** OF HERE, NOW.













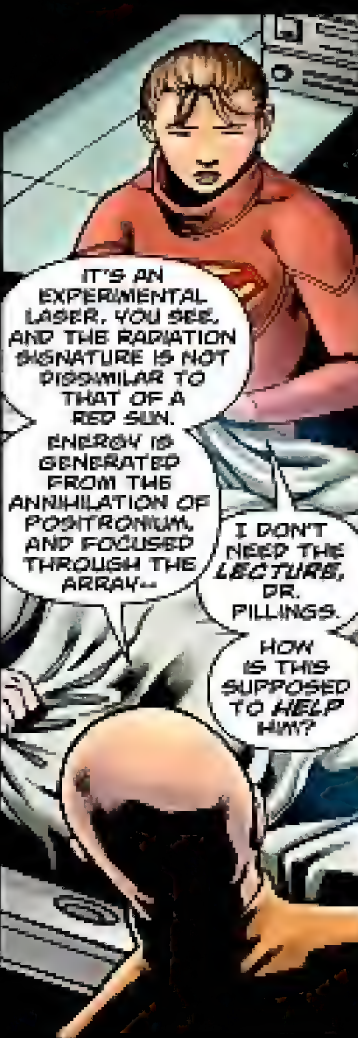
IT IS AN OLD STORY.

...HURTHH...

THIS IS KILLING HIM!

QUITE PROBABLY, GIVEN LONG ENOUGH EXPOSURE.

TO KRYPTONIANS OF MY GENERATION, IT IS A BEDTIME TALE FOR IMAGINATIVE CHILDREN.



IT'S AN EXPERIMENTAL LASER. YOU SEE, AND THE RADIATION SIGNATURE IS NOT DISSIMILAR TO THAT OF A RED SUN.

ENERGY IS GENERATED FROM THE ANNIHILATION OF POSITRONIUM, AND FOCUSED THROUGH THE ARRAY--

I DON'T NEED THE LECTURE, DR. PILLINGS.

HOW IS THIS SUPPOSED TO HELP HIM?



IT MAY NOT, MY DEAR. YOU KRYPTONIANS ARE A HARDY BREED.

THE LASER ARRAY HAS BEEN ACTIVE FOR NEARLY AN HOUR, AND YET WE'VE ONLY MANAGED TO ACQUIRE 49.3% OF WHAT WE NEED.

STILL, THE DATA IS PROMISING.



TOTEMIC SPIRITS IN SERVICE TO A HIGHER BEING.

GOOD. I'D HATE TO THINK YOU WERE TORTURING HIM FOR NO GOOD REASON.

I ASSURE YOU. MY INTENT IS NOT TO HARM YOUR FRIEND.

BUT, IF YOU'LL PARDON THE EXPRESSION, THIS IS NOT AN EXACT SCIENCE.



IF WE KEEP THE REACTORS RUNNING LIKE THIS, DR. PILLINGS, WE'RE GOING TO ATTRACT ATTENTION. OFFICIAL ATTENTION.

WHAT'S OUR STATUS?

I'M UPLOADING SOME PRELIMINARY SCHEMATICS TO YOU NOW, DR. HOSHI.

THE DOOMED ROMANCE OF THE NIGHTWING AND THE FLAMEBIRD

I BELIEVE I'VE WORKED UP A DESIGN THAT MAY FUNCTION ADEQUATELY, THOUGH IT REQUIRES SOME... PROBLEMATIC MATERIALS.



...THAT'S AN UNDERSTATEMENT. IF WE DO THIS, WE'LL HAVE LANE'S PEOPLE ALL OVER US FOR SURE.













...إني لن...  
أفعل...

—I WILL NOT...



...أنت...

...YOU...

لقد كنت...  
أنت...  
أنت...  
أنت...

لقد كنت...  
أنت...  
أنت...  
أنت...

THE HUMANS DO SAY THAT  
LOVE MAKES ONE BLIND.

AND YOU HAVE BEEN VERY  
BLIND, HAVEN'T YOU, MY DEAR?





...YOU...  
YOU CAN'T...  
BE HERE...

THAT'S A  
REMARKABLY  
STUPID THING  
TO SAY.  
I AM HERE.



WHAT A  
SAD LITTLE  
STORY THE  
TWO OF YOU  
MAKE...



...FOREVER  
TOGETHER,  
FOREVER  
APART...



LEAVE HIM  
ALONE!

LEAVE HIM  
ALONE!



BY FATHER RAO,  
PLEASE...

JUST  
LEAVE US  
ALONE.



NOW THINK  
CAREFULLY: IS THAT  
REALLY WHAT YOU  
WANT ME TO DO?

NOW THINK  
CAREFULLY: IS THAT  
REALLY WHAT YOU  
WANT ME TO DO?



OR WOULDN'T YOU  
RATHER THAT I  
FREE HIM?

GIVE HIM BACK  
TO YOU?





...THEY'RE NOT  
THE ONLY THINGS THAT  
CAN DESTROY THE  
FIRESTORM

...THEY'RE  
NOT THE ONLY THINGS  
THAT CAN DESTROY  
THE FIRESTORM

YOU...YOU ARE NOT  
TO BE TRUSTED. YOU  
ARE NEVER TO BE  
TRUSTED.

INDEED.  
BUT THEN, YOU  
HAVE NO OTHER  
CHOICE, DO YOU?

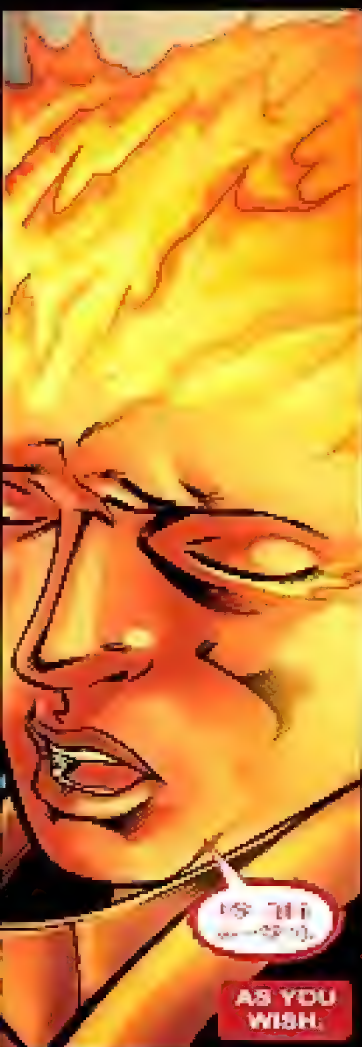


THE  
FIRESTORM  
IS NOT

...THE  
FIRESTORM  
IS NOT  
THE ONLY THING  
THAT CAN DESTROY  
THE FIRESTORM

YOU  
KNOW WHAT  
I WANT.

GIVE IT  
TO ME, AND  
I WILL GIVE YOU  
YOUR HEART'S  
DESIRE.



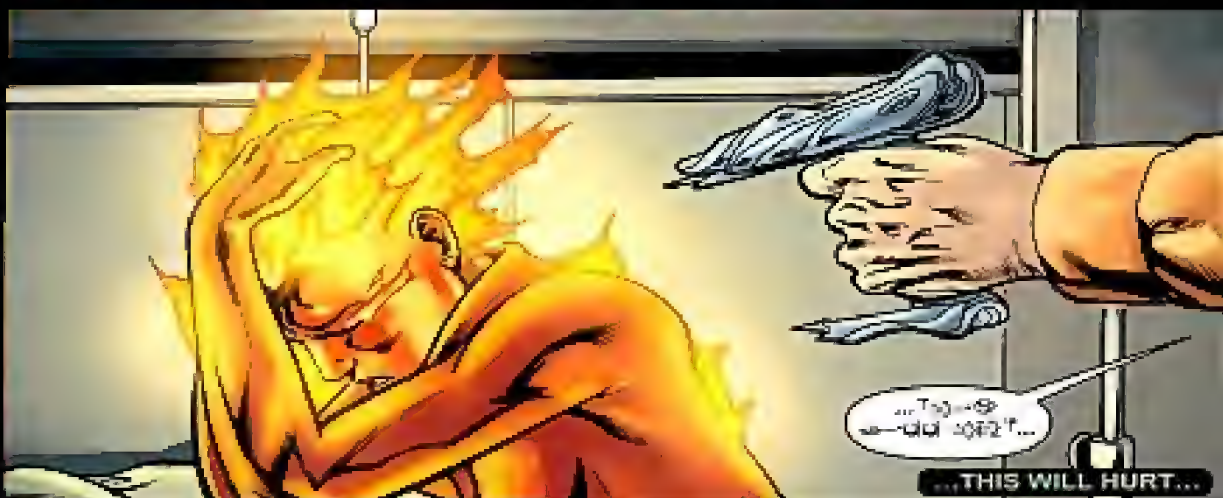
...THE  
FIRESTORM  
IS NOT

AS YOU  
WISH.



...THE  
FIRESTORM  
IS NOT  
THE ONLY THING  
THAT CAN DESTROY  
THE FIRESTORM

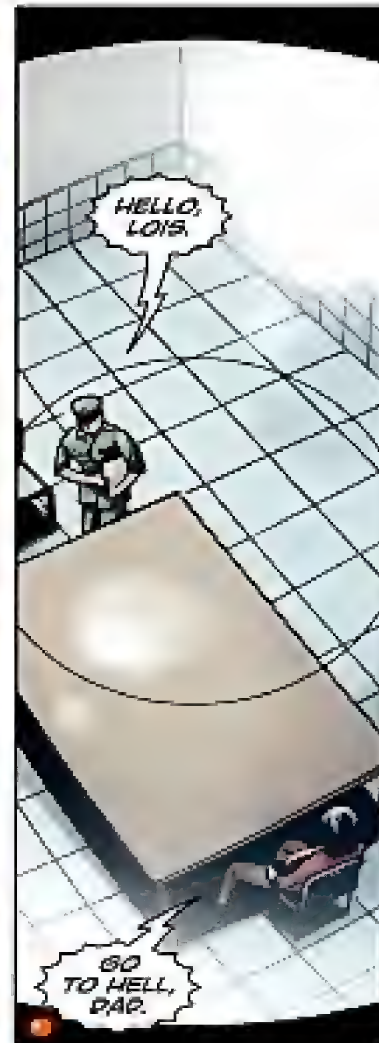
IT IS FORTUNATE  
THAT YOUR HOST  
WILL NOT REMEMBER  
WHAT HAS  
TRANSPIRED...



...THE  
FIRESTORM  
IS NOT

...THIS WILL HURT...



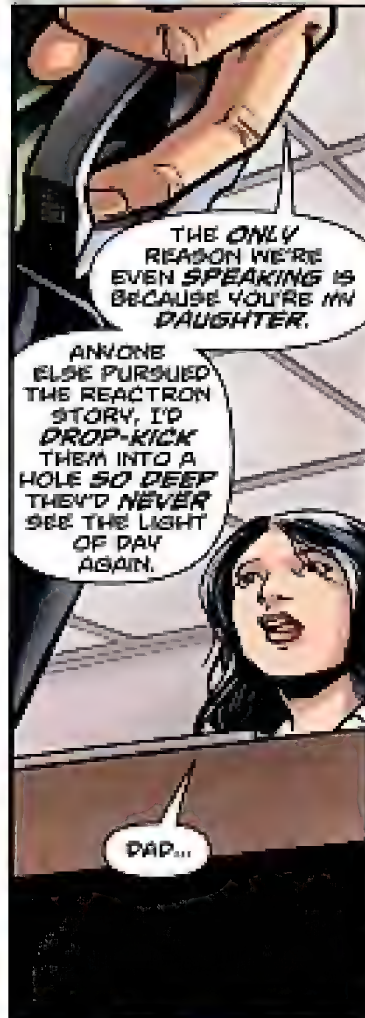


WHICH IS MORE THAN I CAN SAY ABOUT YOU, WITH YOUR FIXATION ON SUPERMAN, YOUR WILLING BLINDNESS ABOUT--

WAIT JUST A DAMN SECOND--

\*SEE SUPERGIRL: "WHO IS SUPERWOMAN?" --Matt









YOU HAD EVERYTHING BACKED UP?



OF COURSE I HAD EVERYTHING BACKED UP! THAT'S NOT THE DAMN POINT!

THE POINT IS MY FATHER THREATENED MY LIFE!

AND THEN RELEASED YOU.



NOT BECAUSE HE WANTED TO.

BECAUSE THE ENTIRE NEWSROOM WATCHED HIS GOON SQUAD CHASE ME DOWN AND TASER ME.



HE'S DEFINITELY HAVING ME FOLLOWED.

THEY'LL HAVE MY PHONES TAPPED, MY MAIL WATCHED, WE'LL PUT EVERYONE I COME INTO CONTACT WITH UNDER SURVEILLANCE, PERRY.

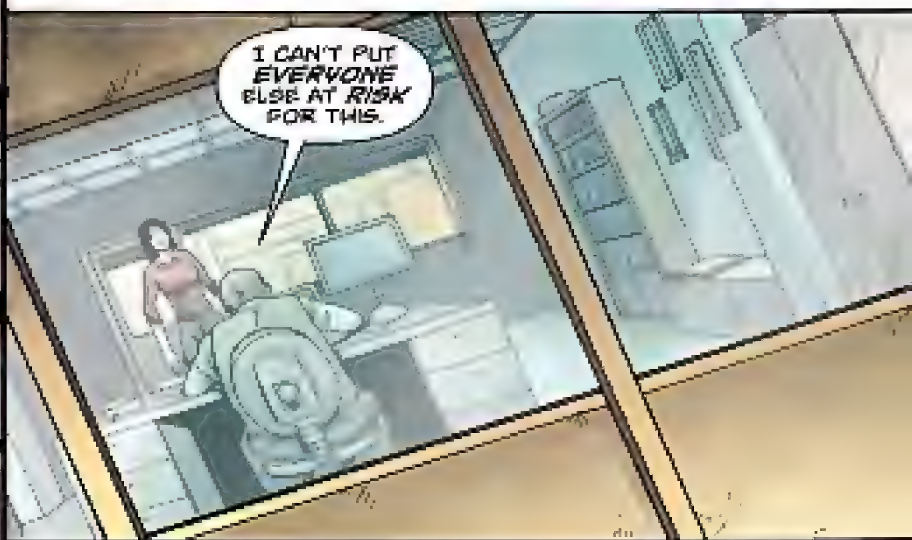
HELL, HE'S PROBABLY LISTENING TO US RIGHT NOW.



WE RUN THE STORY, HE'LL KILL THE PAPER.

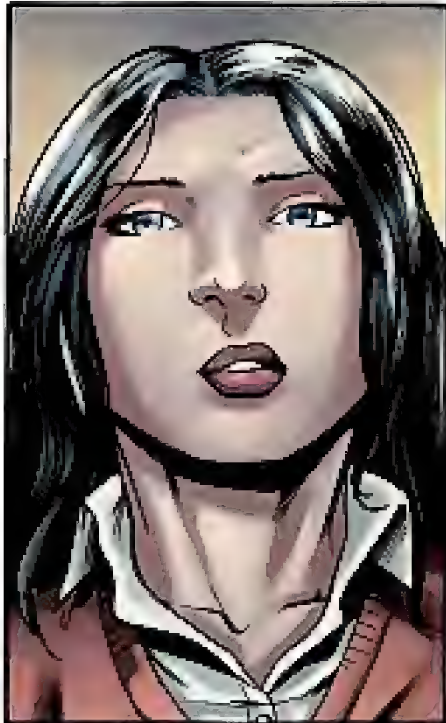
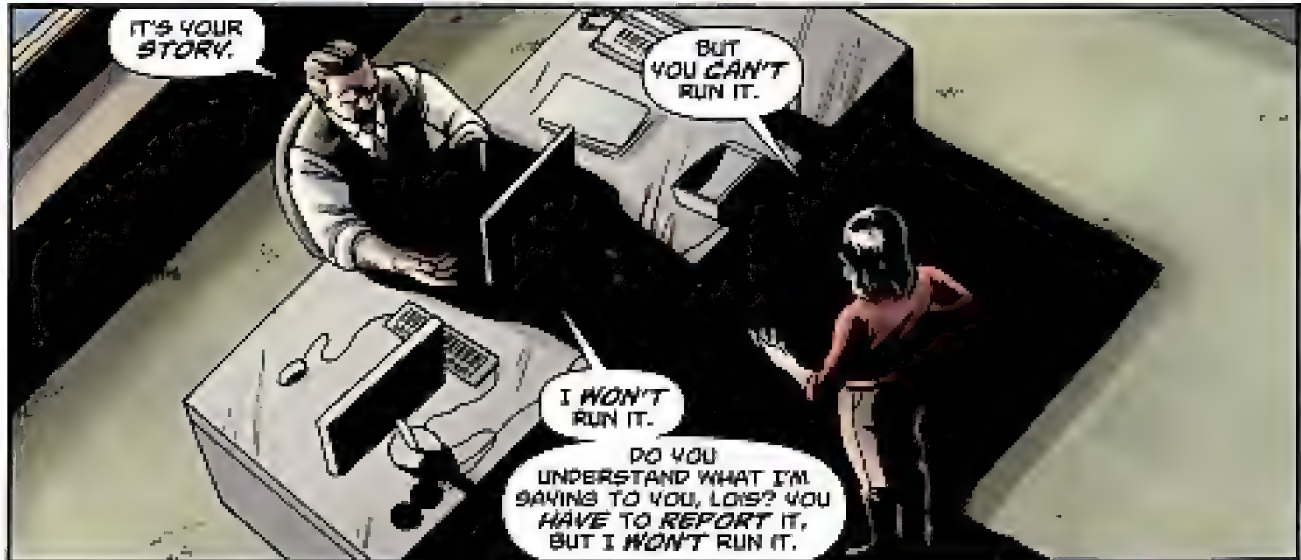
HE'LL SURE TRY.

AND YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY PERSON WHO WORKS HERE



I CAN'T PUT EVERYONE ELSE AT RISK FOR THIS.







AS "PILLINGS," I TAKE A FEW HOURS, OSTENSIBLY STUDYING THE RESULTS OF THE LASER EXPERIMENT.

OH, IT STINGS.

UNDERSTANDABLE

THE UNIQUE RADIATION SIGNATURE IN YOUR CELLS HAS HAD A DESTRUCTIVE EFFECT, ONE THAT THE RESTORATIVE EFFECTS OF EXPOSURE TO STELLAR RADIATION HAS NOT OUTPACED.

BUT THE SOLUTION IS LITTLE MORE THAN A FEAT OF SIMPLE ENGINEERING.

SO, WITH DR. HOSHI'S UNIQUE ABILITIES, WE'LL BE JUMPSTARTING THAT EXPOSURE.

THE DEVICE ON YOUR ARM FOCUSES THE ENERGY COLLECTED FROM DR. HOSHI'S... OUTPUT.

A SIMPLE CONDUCTOR-- IN THIS CASE A NEEDLE COMPOSED OF KRYPTONIAN SUNSTONE--DUMPS THE FLOW INTO YOUR BLOOD CELLS.

ANOTHER HOUR TO COBBLE TOGETHER THE NECESSARY COMPONENTS AND KEEP HOSHI OCCUPIED.

IN SHORT, WE'LL BE **OVERCLOCKING** YOUR BODY'S ABILITY TO PROCESS YELLOW SUN RADIATION, AND HOPING IT REPAIRS ITSELF FASTER THAN THE CELLS ARE BREAKING DOWN.

SHE'S MARGINALLY MORE INTELLIGENT THAN THE AVERAGE HUMAN, AND HER ABILITIES COULD PROVE AN IRRITANT.

THAT'S THE THEORY, ANYWAY.

AND WE DON'T HAVE MUCH TIME. LANE'S PEOPLE ARE FUNNY ABOUT ACCESS TO KRYPTONIAN TECH.

SO LET'S DO THIS.







MIRACLES COME IN SO MANY DIFFERENT FORMS.

THE TRANSFORMATION OF A SICK, ELDERLY BODY INTO A YOUNG, VIBRANT ONE.

WOW.

INDEED. YOU'RE QUITE FORTUNATE, YOUNG MAN.

THIS DEVICE SHOULD KEEP YOUR CELLS INFUSED WITH ENOUGH ENERGY TO PREVENT ANY MORE INCIDENTS OF BURST AGING.

THE METAMORPHOSIS FROM VALIANT HERO TO TERRIFIED LOVER—

CHRIS!

I THOUGHT I WAS LOSING YOU—

—TO SOMETHING THAT DEFIES DESCRIPTION.

BUT YOU DIDN'T LOSE HIM, DID YOU?

ISN'T THAT RIGHT, MY DEAR?

GENETIC MARKERS LOCATED!

DNA SAMPLE OBTAINED.  
ANALYSIS IN PROGRESS.

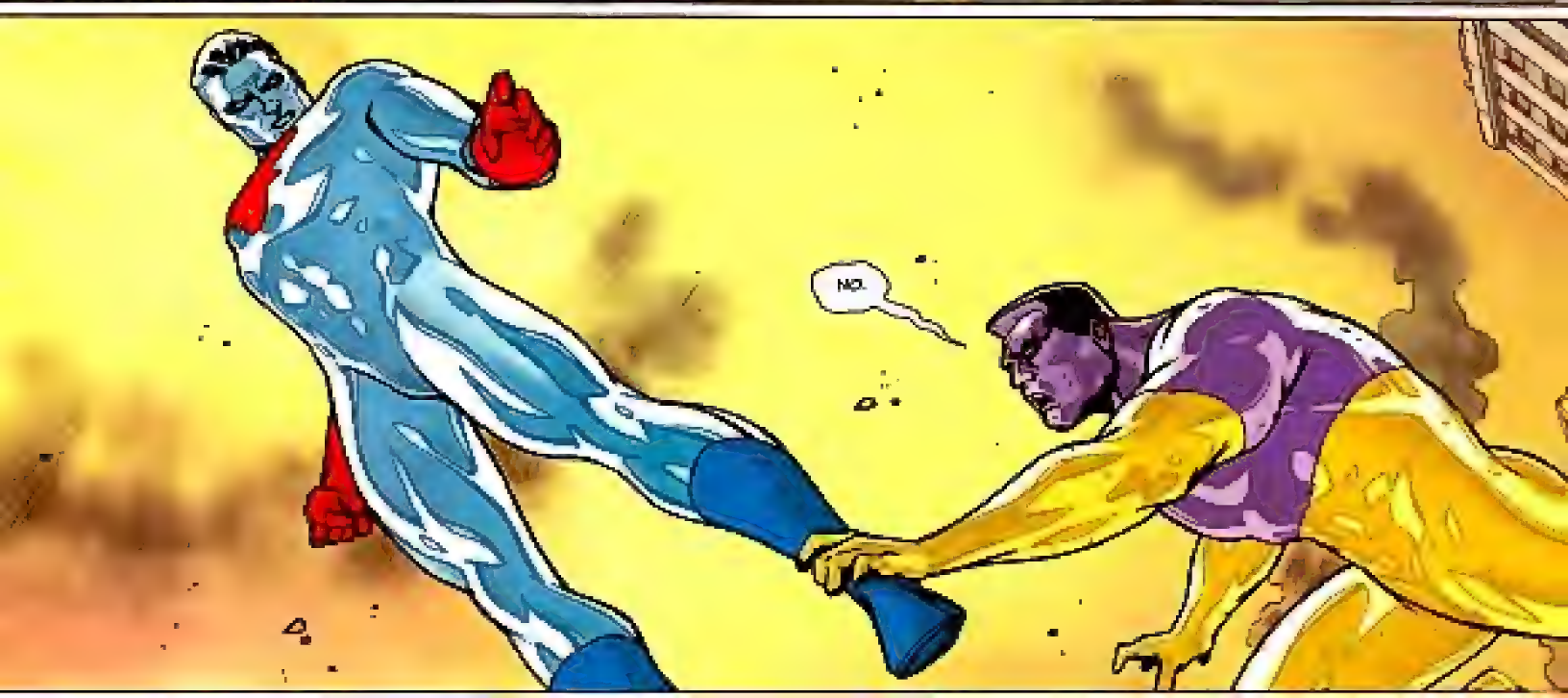
BECAUSE YOU HAVE FRIENDS HERE.

ONE SHOULD ALWAYS REMEMBER ONE'S FRIENDS.

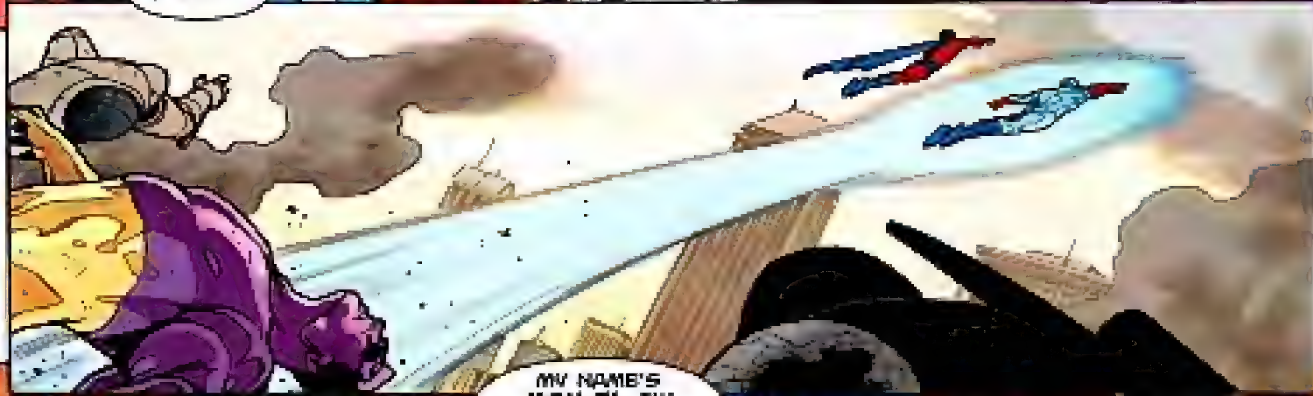
TO BE CONTINUED!

AND NOW...  
CAPTAIN  
ATOM









MY NAME'S  
MON-EL. I'M  
THE PROTECTOR OF  
METROPOLIS WHILE  
SUPERMAN IS  
GONE.



WHILE HE'S  
GONE?

YEAH,  
I'VE SWORN  
TO GUARD THIS CITY  
FOR AS LONG AS  
THERE'S BREATH  
IN MY LUNGS.



DRAMATIC TURN  
OF PHRASE, BUT  
YOU GOT THE BIG  
POWERS TO MATCH  
THOSE BIG WORDS,  
I NOTICED.

SUPERMAN'S  
PLUS, KRYPTONITE  
IS JUST A BLOWING  
GREEN ROCK  
TO ME.



SO YOU'RE  
BETTER?

IF I HAD  
HIS HEART,  
KNOWLEDGE, SPIRIT,  
INTELLIGENCE AND  
EXPERIENCE...



...NO. NOT  
EVEN THEN.  
BUT I'LL DO IN  
A PINCH.

YEAH, I WAS IN  
A PINCH AND YOU DID  
JUST FINE. LUCKY  
YOU COMING ALONG,  
ACTUALLY.





WHERE?...

SPEAKING OF LOCATIONS, WHERE'RE WE GOING?

TAKES AFTER HER UNCLE.



SMART GIRL, THAT NATASHA.

WELL, GENERAL LANE IS NO DUMMY, I CAN TELL YOU THAT FIRSTHAND. YOU WERE ORIGINALLY SUPPOSED TO REAPPEAR IN THE ARIZONA DESERT.



YEAH, I WONDERED WHY THEY'D BE DUMB ENOUGH TO RISK HAVING AN ATOMIC-FUELED BATTLE OVER A MAJOR CITY.

SHE'D ALREADY CHANGED THE ORDER FOR THE TRANSPORTATION COORDINATES SO YOU'D END UP IN METROPOLIS, WHERE I'D BE.



NATASHA IRONS HAS A COMMUNICATION LINE TO ME. SHE TOLD ME TO HELP YOU.

NOTHING LUCKY. GOT THE WORD...LAST MINUTE MAYBE...BUT I KNEW TO EXPECT YOU.





"...SOMEWHERE WE CAN'T  
BE EASILY FOLLOWED."

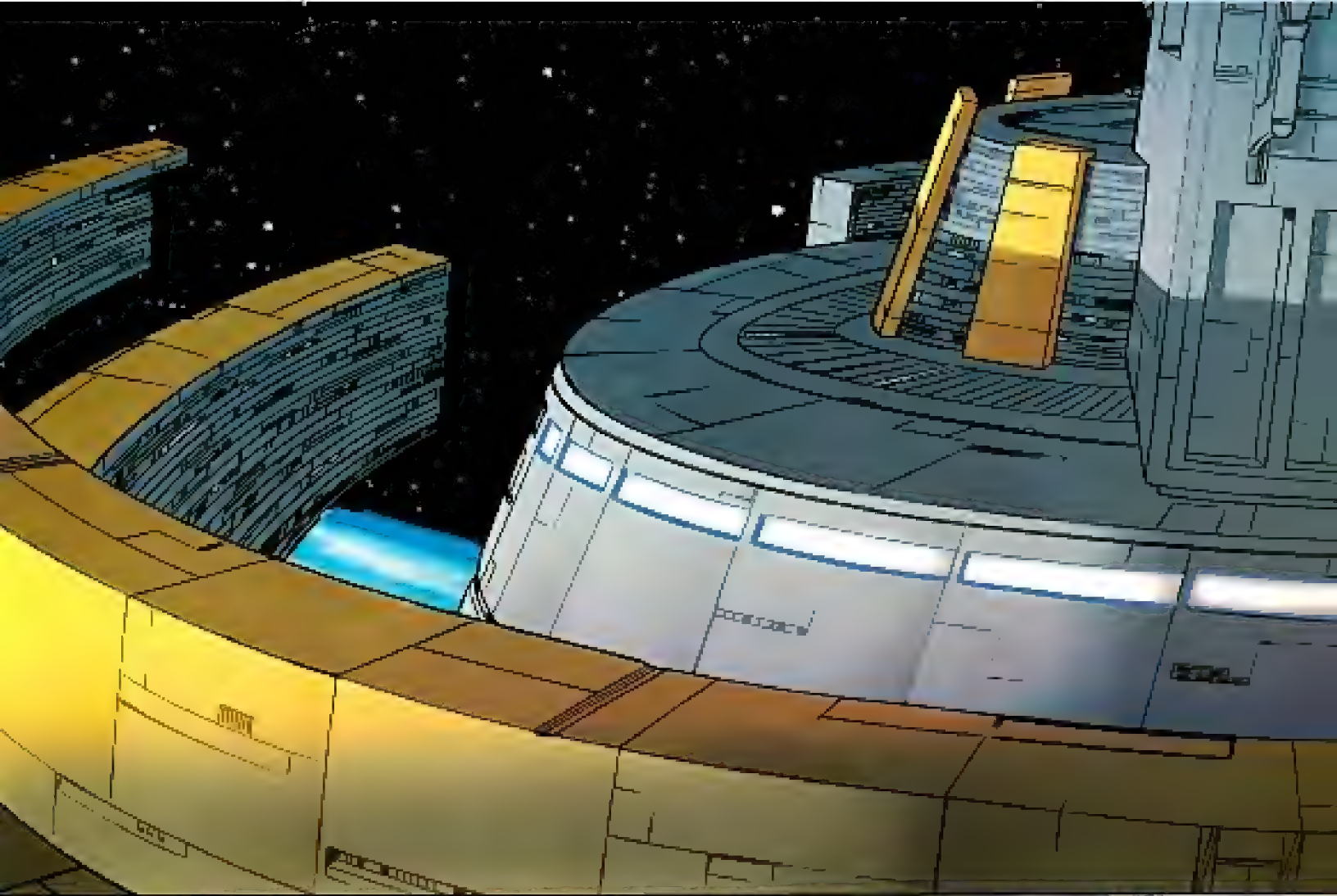
# CAPTAIN ATOM

CHAPTER SIX

JAMES ROBINSON-WRITER • CAFE-ARTIST  
SANTIAGO AREAS • COLORIST • BOB LEIGH-LETTERED  
WIL MOSS-1ST PINTER • MATT IDOLSON-EDITOR











"...WE FOUGHT SUPERMAN AND BATMAN WHEN LEX LUTHOR WAS PRESIDENT AND BRANDED THEM PUBLIC ENEMIES."

YEAH, I WAS REMINDED OF THAT BY MAJOR FORCE. JUST FOUGHT HIM. HE'S STILL GOVERNMENT, I SEE.

THAT CREATURE GOES WHERE THE WIND BLOWS. HE'S BEEN A FRIEND TO THE MILITARY, AN ENEMY OF THE JUSTICE SOCIETY, AND BACK AGAIN.

ALL I KNOW IS THAT HE'S EVIL.



"I CAN EVEN SORT OF RECALL ANOTHER VERSION OF EARTH THAT I VISITED."



SO DO PEOPLE  
THINK THE  
SAME THING OF  
ME NOW? THAT  
I'M EVIL?

MY MEMORY  
IS COMING BACK,  
BUT IT'S  
SELECTIVE.



"I REMEMBER  
MY EARLY DAYS AS  
CAPTAIN ATOM."



"I REMEMBER  
ADVENTURES."

"PEOPLE."

"WOMEN  
I'VE LOVED."



"...WHEN I WAS  
MONARCH."



"I CAN'T REMEMBER  
MUCH... THANK  
GOD... ALL THE EVIL  
AND PAIN AND DEATH  
THAT I CAUSED."

BUT  
OTHER  
TIMES...  
...WHEN I WASN'T  
CAPTAIN ATOM OR  
NATHANIEL ADAM...



YEAH, I WISH  
WE COULD SAY WE  
DIDN'T REMEMBER,  
CAPTAIN...





...BUT WE DO!

YOU'RE A DANGER TO THE WORLD...

...A FUGITIVE FROM THE U.S. MILITARY.

AND IN DIRE NEED OF JUSTICE!

TO BE CONTINUED...





# HAPPY LATE HALLOWEEN, DC NATION!

Here's a peek at how some of the DC staff spent the day....



# DC NATION

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